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26 December 1957

Validity Study of ICBM Estimate Made in NIE 11-5-57:

Soviet Capabilities and Probable Programs in

the Guided Missile Field,

published 12 March 1957

The estimate in NIE 11-5-57 was made in the absence of evidence which could be associated directly with Soviet development of an ICBM. Since its publication in March 1957, some evidence relating to Soviet ICBM development has been acquired. In the light of this new evidence, we believe that NIE 11-5-57 correctly estimated that the USSR attached a high priority to acquisition of an ICBM capability, and that it possessed or was rapidly acquiring the necessary data for solution of ICBM development problems. The new evidence indicates, however, that we underestimated the scale of effort and the rapidity with which the USSR was solving its problems. On the basis of this evidence, we have now advanced the estimated date of first operational capability from 1960-1961 (as estimated in NIE 11-5-57) to sometime in the period mid-1958 to mid-1959.

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